



## To The People



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

December 2025

Thank you for attending the “hub” meetings at Dumbleyung, Coodanup, Bridgetown and Oyster Harbour. It was good to see a cross-section of parishes at each of these places. Revd Harold Lee wins the prize for getting up earliest to reach the hub meeting at Living Water from Hopetoun! We have been perusing all the notes you generated at Synod and the hubs about a new Vision and Strategy, which went to Bishop in Council today.

I am not sure if you have heard Graham Kendrick’s song: *Immanuel*? If you have not, I recommend it for both its words, which are below, and musical setting. It is almost impossible to grasp that God could condescend to become a human, let alone a baby, to be Immanu-el – God *with* us, yet that is exactly what the New Testament avers and the Old Testament foreshadows. It is amazing news for everyone. Hence Handel’s *Messiah* heralds, from Isaiah 9: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.”

I wish you a very blessed Christmas, as we wonder and celebrate at the coming of Christ, the Messiah, in Advent and Christmas.

*Immanuel, O Immanuel  
Bowed in awe I worship at your feet  
And sing Immanuel  
God is with us  
Sharing my humanness, my shame  
Feeling my weaknesses, my pain  
Taking the punishment, the blame  
Immanuel  
And now my words cannot explain  
All that my heart cannot contain  
How great are the glories of your name  
Immanuel*



Mrs Jenny Duncan (pictured left) commenced as our new part Diocesan Secretary this week. Her email will be [secretary@bunbury.org.au](mailto:secretary@bunbury.org.au) and her working hours are 9am – 2pm Mon-Thurs. You can find further details about Jenny in the email sent about her appointment on 20 November. Jennys’ arrival provides such much needed relief to Nick with both his diocesan and parish responsibilities. Jenny will be formally installed at the Ordination Service on 7 February.

A number of dear saints have died over the past month or so. They include Betty Knapp, whose huge funeral Revd Carol Reid kindly took at Boyup Brook. Dear Mike Burgess died suddenly and his funeral took place at Mandurah last Wednesday. Mike was a Colonel in the Army and a specialist communications engineer for 37 years. He had been a Warden at Christ’s Church, Mandurah and long-time chair of the Northern Harvest Deanery. He was much loved and Ven Joe Hopkins took his funeral in a packed church. Robin Depiazzi’s husband Desi has died and also two dear people in Kojonup and Katanning parishes – Val Philpott and Maxine Potter. May they all rest in peace and rise in glory. I am conscious there have been other funerals besides, so please remember one another as we grieve and thank God for these dear saints.



**Left:** Ven Emeritus Joe Hopkins prior to the service of celebration of Mike Burgess' life.

**Right:** Colonel Mike Burgess



### **Student Intensive, Ordination Council and Ordinations on 7 February and 27 June.**

We had three new prospective ordinands join for our most recent Student Intensive in person, and one via Zoom briefly from New Zealand (where they were visiting their son). We have heard of two others who might join the program later in 2026 and one other person who may join much sooner. We thank God and pray for all these people as they seek to discern God's call on their lives.

At Ordination Council, Canon Mavis had carefully organised 214 pages of reports. We named one person to be ordained deacon and six to be ordained as priests, God willing, on 7 February. We also determined we might need a further Ordination Service on 27 June.

With 7 candidates for 7 February, in addition to places for all the clergy, we are proposing to provide tickets for attendance based on family, friends, colleagues and supporters, and using overflows in the Cathedral chapel and Hall.

**Revd Rod Steel** pictured here with an Angel from the Nativity scene at the Cathedral.

***Any suggestions for an apt caption?***



**Left:** Archdeacon Geoff and Revd Nick broken down for six hours between Mt Barker and Manjimup, returning from Oyster Harbour's hub meeting.

Nick eventually got home at 12.30am on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday! They were very impressed with how many good Samaritans stopped to render assistance. The long delay was waiting for the tow truck.



## ABM 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Sydney



**Left:** Revd Dr. Genevieve Milnes kindly represented the diocese at ABM's annual meeting and 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, stepping in for Revd Cathie Broome. A celebratory service was held at St. James in Sydney, followed by a Reception at NSW Parliament House. A very large number of people from Australia and from partner countries and islands across the Far East were present.



### The Six Bishops at the 1850 Conference

*Bishop Short (Adelaide), Bishop Selwyn (New Zealand), Bishop Nixon (Tasmania), Bishop Tyrrell (Newcastle), Bishop Perry (Melbourne), Bishop Broughton (Sydney)*

## Prayer

Loving God,  
 Friend of this ancient and beautiful land;  
 land we call home, land that calls us home.  
 Bless the Anglican Board of Mission  
 as we participate in your healing work.  
 We honour our history.  
 We repent of our failings.  
 We commit to your future.  
 May we nurture relationships of love.  
 May we craft stories of hope.  
 May we contribute to communities of justice.  
 Grant us the wisdom to hear your voice,  
 the courage to follow where you lead,  
 the humility to listen to those we encounter.  
 May we be blessed by those we Partner with,  
 and be a blessing to them.  
 We ask these things in the names of the three that are one.  
 Creator, Redeemer, Companion.  
 Amen.

**Above:** A prayer used by ABM

**Right:** The Executive Director of ABM: Revd Dr John Deane



**Mrs Wendy Mabey and Mrs Isobelle Shortreed** – taken from Wendy's final MU Newsletter as President of our diocesan MU.

"We both attended the Australian Council meeting for the National Mothers' Union. Among the matters we heard about plans for Mothers Union 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations with a special service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London on 10 June 2026. There is a plan to have resources for parishes to use in Sunday worship during June to highlight the work of Mothers Union

The Global Gathering in Durban South Africa will take place from 30th Sept – 2/3 October. It is expected that some 2000 people may take part. Costs are still being finalised but it is expected that the conference fee will be around \$217, with delegates needing to book their own travel and accommodation. Some elements of the gathering may be life-streamed for those not able to be present.

There were several opportunities for Isobelle and I to be a part of focus group discussions on what MU in Australia might look like moving forward into the future and how we might spread the word about MU and encourage engagement and participation.

During Australian Council, nominations for the 2026-28 Australian Executive were confirmed. Dr Robin Ray was declared elected as our Australian President for a second term and **I have been elected into the role of Vice-President: Family & Domestic Violence**. I am particularly keen to be involved with this portfolio and over the next few months, while I complete my term as Australian Overseas and Northern Outreach Coordinator, I will also be turning my mind as to what might be achieved in my new role.” **(The bold print above is my addition – many congratulations Wendy!)** Below are the new MU National Executive members – please pray for them.



#### National Bishops' Meeting – and a farewell to Anne Hywood & the Primate



The national bishops' meeting was held in Sydney to coincide with ABM's 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We farewelled Anne Hywood, pictured top left and right, who has been General Secretary for 13 years, after serving in Adelaide, Grafton and Melbourne dioceses. Her service to the Anglican Church of Australia has been exemplary.

Steven Daly, who provided the Bible Studies for our Clergy Retreat earlier this year, gave the Bible Studies for the bishops' meeting. His theme was Parables and Prayer and the sessions were as compelling and informative as were ours back in March.

It was Archbishop Geoff Smith's final bishops' meeting as Primate and we laid hands on and prayed for his successor, Bishop Mark Short, who is now the new Primate.



Because it was on the way home, I was able to attend Archbishop Geoff laying up his staff in St. Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide – pics below... Right: Archbishop Geoff sitting with his wife and daughter listening to the Governor of South Australia thanking him for his service. Archbishop Geoff was clear he is not retiring but waiting to see what God has next in store for him.



### **Giving to Kapsabet Diocese - message from Laura in the diocesan office.**

We have some monies to send to Bishop Paul towards the costs of finishing their diocesan office plaza. If you are also planning on sending any funds for this cause, please ensure funds are deposited with the diocesan office **by Friday 12 December** and please email Laura on [accounts@bunbury.org.au](mailto:accounts@bunbury.org.au) so she knows who has sent the money and for what purpose. These funds will then be sent to Bishop Paul before Christmas.

### **Cathie Broome passes on some good news from Kapsabet**

I thought I would pass on this wonderful and exciting news from our friends Bethuel and Elizabeth in Kapsabet...

*Good evening good Cathie! As we close the week, allow me to share the good news of God's favor. It is with gratitude, privilege and honor to officially communicate to you as a friend and colleague in the ministry that my wife, Elizabeth has been appointed as the Provincial MU Coordinator after a very rigorous process and interviews. Please join me in congratulating her. We thank His Grace, the Archbishop of Kenya and the Provincial MU Council for a well thought through process driven by transparency and meritocracy. God loves us all! For this we say, to God be the glory.*

(Elizabeth is an Archdeacon and the Principal of the Theological College in Kapsabet - I had the privilege of meeting her several times earlier this year)

### **Upgrades to our AI Policy?**

Following the fascinating session Revd Paul Bartley put on for us at our Clergy Conference, Nick was at the Registrar's Conference last week in Port Lincoln. Among the matters they discussed was AI. As a result of that discussion Nick is bringing some proposed amendments to Bishop in Council this week. Essentially, the concern is that free AI tools are not as secure as pay as you go versions and information may not be stored in Australia. This has repercussions not only for which versions of AI we use, it may also affect whether we should change away from using Zoom to Microsoft teams. We will provide further information after Bishop in Council have looked at this.



Revd Carolyn Ball sent the following pictures of prayer spaces she developed for GMAS students, especially in Primary:



### Hub Meetings in Bridgetown, Coodanup and Oyster Harbour





## 🎸 Blues at Bridgetown 🎵



St Paul's was packed to capacity and beyond yet again for the annual Gospel Service during the Blues at Bridgetown weekend. Mary and Esther Evans with Daun Crozier on djembe led the assembled congregation in a number of well-known Gospel Spiritual songs - Rev Sue Kemp



gave a concluding address. Many stayed on afterwards to enjoy morning tea - and cakes - together. It was a great morning which has become embedded as an expression of genuine Blues roots, connecting the music of slavery with the freedom of the Gospel of Christ.

*Revd David Bardsley*

## Spring Celebration – Songs of Praise in Bridgetown

All the Churches in Bridgetown came together on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October for a combined Spring Celebration of Songs and Words of Praise.

The Uniting Church Hall was packed as 70 people aged from a few weeks to lots of years joined together to raise the roof in songs of praise. Our voices were indeed raised as we sang several familiar hymns and songs combined with some recently composed songs.



*The leaders of all the Churches in Bridgetown*

The Jubilee Singers presented two items including a choral version of Psalm 23 – “The Lord is my Shepherd” – the setting which was used in The Vicar of Dibley.

The singing was supplemented by readings from the Biblical book of Psalms and prayers of praise and concern. We were led by a group of songsters and musicians from the different Churches.

All the Churches in town were well represented, and it was a remarkable expression of unity within our Christian community. Denominational boundaries evaporated as we “walked together” in praise. A unique photo opportunity presented itself as all the Church Leaders linked together in solidarity at the close of the meeting.

We were grateful to the members of the Uniting Church who organized refreshments afterwards and it was heart warming to see people from various community groups mingling freely around the pies, cakes and coffee. We were also pleased to welcome folk who are not aligned with any particular Church joining us, including people from the Talison mining camp after their shift at work.

Our next Churches Together event is “Sing Christmas” hosted at St Paul’s Church on Monday evening 22nd December when we celebrate the Birth of Jesus in songs and readings. Do come and join us!



## Lent 2026 – Bishops’ Lent Course on Joy

This is available now for \$10 each. Orders can be made with the following link: <https://www.garrattpublishing.com.au/product/9781922441195/>

I understand that as last year there will be a free or less expensive online version and we will relay the detail of this as soon as we have it to hand.



## WALKING TOGETHER TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

Dean Darryl took part in Bunbury’s Reconciliation Walk on October 30 during National Reconciliation Week, joining hundreds of locals under the 2025 theme **“Bridging Now to Next”**. The theme reflects the ongoing connection between past, present and future and urges us to look ahead and continue the push forward as past lessons guide us.



## The Governor’s Apology in Pinjarra

His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM has taken the historic step of issuing a formal apology for the actions of Western Australia’s first Governor Sir James Stirling during the Pinjarra Massacre of 1834.

On the 191st anniversary of the killings on the banks of the Murray River, Governor Dawson stood on the same ground as his predecessor and said sorry to the Bindjareb Noongar people, and the wider Aboriginal community of Western Australia.

“As Governor of Western Australia, I come to you today to say: I am deeply sorry for the actions of my predecessor and for the pain and suffering he caused,” Governor Dawson said.



To read more about this event and view the full text of the Governor's Apology, visit the Government House website: <https://govhouse.wa.gov.au/.../governor-chris-dawson.../>



Today, the Governor apologised to the Bindjareb people of the Noongar nation for the Pinjarra Massacre, one of Western Australia's darkest moments.

This is an important day in our State's history: recognising and apologising for the harm and pain to Bindjareb men, women and children, and their descendants, of the Pinjarra massacre.

**Truth-telling is an important step on our journey to reconciliation.**

### **Advent Suggestion from Naomi Backhouse at Northcliffe**

*This is our favourite advent calendar and even my 17 and 19 year olds eagerly await their turn to add a character and arrange the scene. I was preparing for advent both in the church and family over the weekend and I thought of an advent calendar I would like to see. Wouldn't it be wonderful if across the diocese churches, school, individuals and groups recorded 24 different carols and next year one was released each day of Advent. We have so many musicians across the diocese from accapela in Northcliffe, church organs, more modern groups and groups of children singing it would be a way to worship together and by the time you get to Christmas Eve you'd have a selection without copyright that could be used by smaller churches with a mix of known and lesser known carols, modern and ancient and perhaps some from other cultures that point to Jesus as the cause of our celebrations. Even Northcliffe has a community recording studio that is inexpensive to use and I expect we'd have other skills across the Diocese if people are interested and willing.*

*Anyway it's one idea...*

*God Bless you, Naomi*

**Please let us know if you would like to offer a carol for next year!**



## From the Sustainable Living Working Group...

*Rev'd Justine Richmond writes about **Sustainable Christmas Giving**.*

I cannot count the number of emails and messages I have received in the last two weeks about "Black Friday" sales. As we approach Christmas, I am mindful of the amount of 'stuff' we are tempted to buy.

Of course, we all know there are sustainable ways to approach gift giving, including:

- practical and reusable items – keep cups, beeswax wraps, insulated water bottles, bamboo straws.
- home made food and preserves.
- experiences – buy a ticket to the local pantomime, a concert or a sporting event.
- nature based gifts – plants and seeds, DIY gifts and upcycling.
- recycled gifts – go Christmas shopping at your local op shop.

As I considered the ways I could treasure creation through my Christmas planning, Adrian Price sent through the below reflection. It made me realise that our resources are so finite, and there is a fine line between the abundance we enjoy, and scarcity. We must take care of our resources - which God has given us - and only buy or keep what we need.

*From Adrian Price: **The ABC Radio version of Country Hour was launched 80 years ago, 1945.***

My mind went back to when I lived on a farm in Norfolk, England; during the Second World War which also ended 80 years ago. We had two Fordson tractors but due to fuel rations, these were left in the shed. Fortunately, the farm still had a team of draught horses and appropriate implements.

All available shipping was used to transport troops and weapons, not food. Local authorities encouraged residents to grow their own food; many homes did not have room for gardens, so allotments were created, somewhat like our present day community gardens. These facilities were able to teach residents how to grow food. In some cases, sporting grounds were converted to larger food producing areas utilising draught horses.

Land girls and prisoners of war were often engaged to produce food on farms as most male farmers were in the armed forces.

In the early 1950's I used to assist at Elder's Saleyards located across the road from St John of God Hospital, Subiaco. Magnificent draught horses were being sold for pet meat value.

During the last ten years, fuel reserves in Australia have been as low as 19 days; a far cry from the minimum proposed storage of 90 days. Australia relies heavily on overseas fuel supplies and safe shipping routes, let alone union strikes or severe weather conditions. Unfortunately, we no longer have teams of draught horses as a backup. Who will then feed the world and Australia?.

We experienced considerable disruption to WA food supplies when State borders were closed during COVID19 and again when the Nullarbor was flooded.

Food for thought. Adrian Price.



## Bishop's Calendar

**December** (From 23 November – 16 Days of Activism Against gender-based violence)

- 4** Bishop-in-Council & Trustees Meetings, Diocesan Office
- 5** GMAS School Council Meeting and End of Year Dinner
- 6** Parish Visit: Pinjarra, Waroona, Dwellingup & Coolup
- 7** Confirmation Service, St Mary's Busselton
- 8** 9am and 1.30pm Presentations at Halls Head and Meadow Springs Primary
- 10** GMAS Secondary Presentation
- 11** BCGS Whole School Eucharist
- 12** BCGS Secondary Speech Night
- 14** Baptism & Confirmations, All Saints Collie
- 15** Meeting at AngliSchools House, Perth  
Zoom meeting with Anglicare WA CEO and Chairperson.
- 16** Zoom meeting with Ian Leverington, CEO ACF
- 18** Possible visit to Kulin and Christmas service at Hyden (tbc)

***The Diocesan Office will be closed from 24<sup>th</sup> December to 4<sup>th</sup> January***

- 24** 6pm and 11pm services at Christ's Church, Mandurah
- 25** 8am and 10am services at Christ's Church

**January** **5** Diocesan Office Reopens for 2026

Blessings,

